

apparatus. In accordance with the claimed invention, when this trouble condition information is transmitted, management information about *another* item of equipment is transmitted along with it.

In the rejection of the claims, the Office Action states that the Kageyama Publication discloses a detector 2100 for detecting trouble which has occurred in first equipment, e.g. printer engine 2200, and a transmission controller 300 for transmitting management information. The Office Action acknowledges, however, that the Kageyama Publication is silent with respect to transmitting information about second equipment. The Office Action goes on to assert, however, that this difference would be an obvious modification to the system disclosed in the Kageyama Publication.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection does not meet the criteria for a *prima facie* case of obviousness. As set forth in MPEP §2143, three basic criteria must be met to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. The first of these is that "there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference..." This section of the Manual goes on to state that the teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination "*must...be found in the prior art, not in applicant's disclosure.*" (emphasis added).

It is respectfully submitted that the statement of rejection does not meet this standard. The Office Action expressly acknowledges that the Kageyama reference does not teach the transmission of management information about second equipment, together with trouble information about first equipment. Furthermore, the Office Action does not cite any other prior art, or evidence of the knowledge

generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, which teaches or suggests the modification asserted therein. Hence, the allegation of obviousness can only be based upon the teachings of the Applicant's own disclosure which, as set forth in the MPEP, is improper.

For at least this reason, therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection based upon the Kageyama reference is not supportable, and should be withdrawn.

Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is based upon a mischaracterization of the disclosure of that reference. In support of the allegation of obviousness, the Office Action states that the Kageyama reference discloses a database 2121 that stores individual printer management information "of a plurality of printers..." It is respectfully submitted that the Kageyama patent does not support the quoted portion of this statement. Rather, as its name implies, the database 2121 stores information about an "individual" printer, namely the printer 200 in which it is located. See the last sentence of paragraph 0040. As illustrated in Figure 10, referenced therein, the database only stores information relating to a given printer. There is no indication in the Kageyama reference that the database 2121 stores information about more than one printer.

Furthermore, there is no reason to transmit information about more than one printer in the system disclosed in the Kageyama reference. As described in the background portion of the reference, the objective of the disclosed system is to facilitate the ability of a user to cope with a problem on his or her printer, as well as understand the various types of consumable articles associated with that printer. As described in paragraphs 0078-0084, cited in the Office Action, when the user sends a print job from his or her computer 300 to the printer 200, if a trouble condition

exists on the printer, a notification is sent to the user's computer 300. In response, the user at the computer 300 may issue an inquiry as to the method of coping with that condition. This inquiry is sent back to the printer 200, and from there relayed to a second computer 400 that is associated with the manufacturer of the printer. This second computer 400 includes a database 4130 that explains how to cope with the particular trouble condition that is occurring. This information is sent back to the printer 200, which then forwards it to the user at the first computer 300.

In this situation, there is no need for the user at the computer 300 to obtain information about any other printer, i.e. second equipment. The concern of the user is the ability to cope with the particular trouble condition that is occurring at the printer 200 to which he or she has sent a print job. As such, the user only wants to fix that particular condition, so that the print job can be completed. Information about the status of any other printer, or other such equipment, would not be useful in such a situation.

For at least the foregoing reasons, therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Kageyama patent does not suggest the claimed subject matter to a person of ordinary skill in the art. In particular, there is no teaching in that reference to suggest sending management information about a second piece of equipment when transmitting trouble information about a first piece of equipment. Reconsideration

and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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